

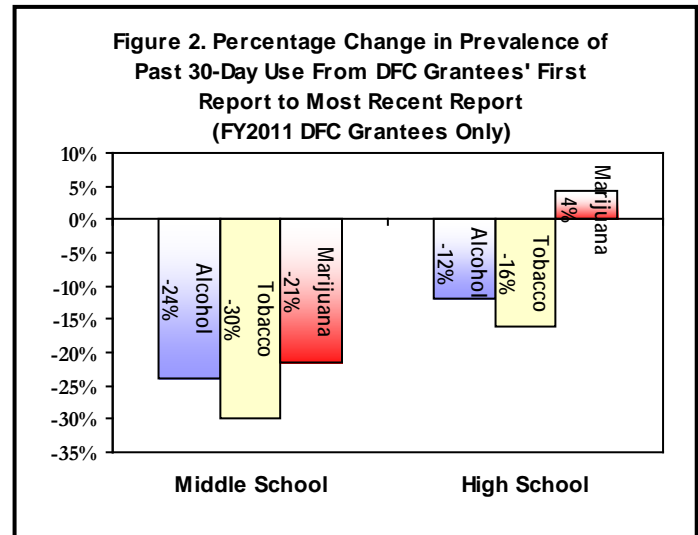
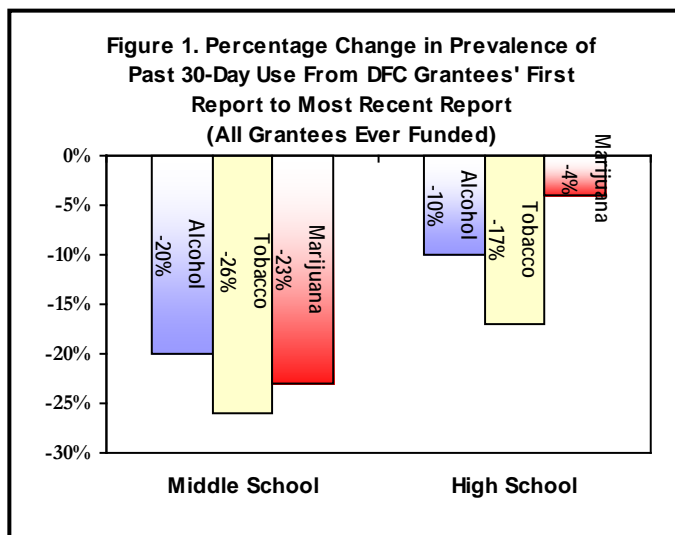


## National Evaluation of the Drug-Free Communities Support Program Summary of Core Outcome Findings through 2012

*The goals of the Drug-Free Communities Support Program (DFC) are to strengthen community collaboration and to reduce youth substance use.*

Administered by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), with support from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Drug-Free Communities (DFC) grant program supports community coalitions in preventing and reducing youth substance use. The contributions of community coalitions constitute a critical part of the Nation's drug prevention infrastructure. They are a catalyst for creating local change where drug problems manifest and affect the citizens of this country. DFC grantees are required to provide data for the national evaluation of DFC, and a summary of findings from these grantee-reported data follows.

### What Have We Found So Far: Long Term Trends (First to Most Recent Report)?



- **Across All DFC Grantees Ever Funded, Rates of Substance Use Have Declined Significantly in DFC Communities:** Prevalence of past 30-day use declined significantly across all substances (alcohol, tobacco, marijuana) and school levels (middle and high school) between all DFC grantees' ever funded first and most recent data reports (see Figure 1).
- **Among Current DFC Grantees, Rates of Substance Use Declined Significantly with the Exception of Past 30-Day Marijuana Use in High School Students.** Prevalence of past 30-day use declined significantly for alcohol and tobacco at each school level (middle and high school) within current DFC grantees' funded between first and most recent data reports. Past 30-day use of marijuana also declined significantly among middle school youth for this group. However, current DFC grantees reported a significant increase in the percentage of high school youth who reported past 30-day use of marijuana between first and most recent report (see Figure 2).
- **Comparison to YRBS Data.** Prevalence of past 30-day use was significantly lower for DFC high school students as compared to a nationally-representative sample of high school students taking the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). Differences in prevalence of 30-day use between DFC and YRBS were statistically significant for alcohol in 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2011. Differences in prevalence of 30-day use were statistically significant for marijuana in 2003, 2005, 2007, and 2009, but not in 2011.

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- **Perceptions of Substance Use are Moving Significantly in the Right Direction:** Among all DFC grantees ever funded and among current DFC grantees, perception of risk for alcohol and tobacco use increased significantly among DFC youth at both the middle and high school levels between first report and most recent report. Perception of risk of marijuana use did not change significantly between first and most recent report. Youth perception of parental disapproval increased significantly for alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use over the same period for these two groups of DFC grantees.

## Recent Trends: 2011 Report versus Next Most Recent Report

The following trends were observed among DFC grantees that reported on outcome data collected in 2011. Because DFC grantees are required to report outcome data every two years, these recent trends are based on data from less than half of DFC grantees. Rather than comparing first to most recent data report, these trends focus on comparisons between the 2011 report to the next most recent report.

- **Middle School Alcohol Use and High School Alcohol and Tobacco Use Continued to Decline Significantly in DFC Grantee Communities:** Among DFC grantees that reported data from 2011, there was a significant decline in prevalence of alcohol use at both the middle school level (-1.6 percentage points) and high school level (-2.2 percentage points) from their next most recent report (most commonly data from 2009 or 2010). High School tobacco use also decreased significantly (-1.4 percentage point) during this time period.
- **Middle School Tobacco Use Increased Significantly in DFC Grantee Communities:** Middle school tobacco use increased significantly (+1.0 percentage point increase) between the 2011 report and the next most recent report. These middle school youth reported no significant change in perception of risk of tobacco use, although perception of parental disapproval of tobacco use increased significantly (+1.0 percentage points).
- **Prevalence of Past 30-Day Use of Marijuana is Increasing and Perceptions of Risk of Marijuana Use are Declining:** Among DFC grantees that reported data from 2011, prevalence of marijuana use among both middle school and high school youth increased significantly (+0.7 and +1.3 percentage points respectively) from their next most recent report. During this same time frame, there was a significant decline in perception of risk for using marijuana among middle school (-6.0 percentage points) and high school (-3.1 percentage points) youth in these DFC communities. Perception of parental disapproval of marijuana use did not change significantly during this time period. The recent trend in increased prevalence of marijuana use is similar to the results from the National Survey of Drug Use and Health which reported that 30-day use of marijuana increased by 0.6 percentage points among 13 year olds and by 1.0 percentage points among 18 year olds between 2010 and 2011.

## Strategy Findings

The work of DFC grantees represents a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach focusing on the reduction of youth substance use that reaches communities containing more than one third of the Nation's population. In the August 2012 report, every DFC grantee (100%) indicated they had engaged in information dissemination activities. Virtually all (99%) provided services related to enhancing skills, 92 percent engaged in activities to promote access/reduce barriers to prevention and treatment services; 88 percent engaged in supporting positive opportunities for positive activities reducing risk for substance use; 82 percent carried out activities designed to increase incentives for non-use; 79 percent promoted law or policy changes to decrease substance use and associated negative behaviors; and 75 percent engaged in activities to change physical environments to decrease opportunities for and encouragement of substance use. More DFC grantees provided skills activities for youth than any other community group; alternative drug-free activities for youth were the support activity used by the most DFC grantees; reducing home access to substances was the enhancing access/reducing barriers activity most often used by DFC grantees; and more DFC grantees focused on school policies than on any other category of law and policy change.

NOTE: As with any evaluation, the DFC evaluation has a number of limitations that may affect the results. Because of these limitations and the uncertainty they produce, a causal relationship cannot be claimed between DFC coalition activities and the outcomes reported here. However, the results are consistent with expectations that DFC is effective when the program has been implemented as intended. Please see the full report for additional information.

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